



Goals 2000

Educate America Act

CHILD DEVELOPMENT POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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A NATION AT RISK

American education faces a "rising tide of mediocrity," warned the 1983 report, *A Nation at Risk*. The alarming tone of the report caused governors of all 50 states to commit to a set of educational goals to be achieved by the year 2000. These goals were ultimately passed by Congress and signed into law by President Bill Clinton in March, 1994 as the Goals 2000: Educate America Act. Public Law 103-227.

WHY GOALS 2000?

In the United States, educational goals, curriculum, and assessments are determined at the state and local levels. Goals 2000 represents a commitment by the federal government to build partnerships with state and local communities in an effort to improve student academic achievement. Goals 2000 attempts to assist states in developing and implementing their own educational reforms.

OVERVIEW

Goals 2000 encourages educational reform at the state and local levels. Title 111 of the Goals 2000 Act provides resources to states and communities to improve student academic achievement. States, school districts, and schools have the flexibility to determine the best way to meet their specific needs. Funds may be utilized towards fulfilling the National Education Goals (box), or towards similar goals proposed by participating states. Activities may include: quality professional development for teachers, expanding the use of computers in the classroom, raising academic standards, and increasing parental and community involvement in education.

GOALS 2000 NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS

- ~ SCHOOL READINESS ~
- ~ IMPROVED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT ~
- ~ ADULT LITERACY AND LIFELONG LEARNING ~
- ~ TEACHER EDUCATION &
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ~
- ~ INCREASED GRADUATION RATE ~
- ~ EXCELLENCE IN MATH AND SCIENCE ~
- ~ SAFE, DISCIPLINED AND DRUG FREE SCHOOLS ~
- ~ PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ~

In California, the Governor, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the State Legislature have recommended that Goals 2000 funds be used for improving reading comprehension.

STATE ADMINISTRATION

In California, the State Board of Education carries out the duties of the State Panel as referred to in the Educate America Act. The State Panel is authorized to develop a State Plan for restructuring and improving the state's educational system. This State Panel also determines how grants will be made available to local communities. Additional responsibilities of the California State Board of Education include, as part of Goals 2000:

- providing mechanisms for implementing system-wide improvements;
- developing benchmarks for assessing student performance and accountability;
- ongoing planning to promote reform at the school level;
- developing strategies to keep students from dropping out; and
- supporting the coordination of vocational instruction.

LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION

In California, improvement grants have been awarded to school districts with a focus on reading and professional development activities. Generally, local school districts that seek to participate in the Goals 2000 program may submit requests to the California Department of Education, the administering agency in this state. To receive Goals 2000 funds, school districts must indicate how the grant will be spent to meet State goals. School districts that submit plans may utilize as much

as 25 percent of funds during the planning process in the first year, and 15 percent in subsequent years. The remaining funds are to be spent directly by the school site.

Grants are awarded for three years. Unless federal funding increases or the focus of California's Goals 2000 plan changes, most districts will have their grants renewed for the -third year period. Although new improvement grants are not currently available, they may be in the future.

CALIFORNIA FUNDING FOR GOALS 2000

| Year | Federal Funding | State Funding |
|------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1994 | \$ 105 million | \$10.5 million |
| 1995 | \$ 372 million | \$42.1 million |
| 1996 | \$ 340 million | \$39.2 million |

LEGISLATIVE AND COMMUNITY ACTION PROJECT

COMPONENTS

Goals 2000 provides funding for states and outlines program administration through Title III of the National Education Act. Other components include:

Title I of Goals 2000 establishes national education goals that symbolize the objectives of this Act. The goals are not mandates, and states may adopt their own similar goals. California's focus on reading comprehension serves as an example of the state's authority within the educational arena.

Title II established the 'National Education 'Goals panel to monitor the nation's progress toward the National Education Goals. The panel is comprised of eight governors, four state legislators, four members of Congress, the Secretary of Education and the President's Domestic Policy Advisor.

Additionally, **Title IV** awards separate grants to create parental information and resource centers to increase parents' knowledge concerning child-rearing and to strengthen partnerships between parents and educators in meeting their child's needs. **Title V** 'creates a National Skill Standards Board to support the development and adoption of voluntary occupational skill standards and certification.

SCHOOL READINESS

The first goal reflects the challenge that many teachers are facing in the classroom. Increasingly, children are entering the classroom at differing levels of school readiness. Child poverty, nutrition, health, and exposure to the educational environment are noted factors in preparing children to learn. Child care and development programs, programs which can prepare children to learn, often play a key role in school readiness, as such programs engage children in socially and cognitively stimulating activities, as well as link children to ancillary services, all of which are necessary for school readiness. Appropriate readiness for educational achievement is the key to successful learning, and is necessary at every stage of a child's life.

Goals 2000 grants in California have thus far been focused at the K- 12 level, and few school districts have dedicated funds towards promoting school readiness through child care and development programs or other programs. While there are exceptions, many school districts cite lack of funding as an issue. School readiness components may, be included in the final reports due October 1, 1996.

GRANTS AWARDED

To date, 1,883 California schools in 227 districts are participating in activities funded by Goals 2000. Their efforts will reach nearly one million California school children during the program's initial three-year funding phase. California's Goals 2000 grants for 1995 range from \$10,000 to over \$1.5 million, serving groups as small as 76 students to as many as a quarter of a million. The California Department of Education allocates funding based upon student population in participating schools.

GOALS 2000 ACTIVITIES

When Goals 2000 funding was accepted for the 1995-96 federal fiscal year, an agreement was made between the Governor, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the United States Secretary of Education, Richard Riley that, aside from local

improvement grants, funding for reading activities, through professional development and pre-service teacher education, could be geared towards bettering the state's education goal of improved reading comprehension.

Other samples of Goals 2000 activities include:

- * Developing personal learning plans for all students;
- * Lengthening instructional time to include after-school hours, evenings and Saturday mornings;
- * Training parents on factors that influence student success; and
- * Establishing school-wide computer networks and parent resource centers.

SCHOOL READINESS

By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn

The objectives for this goal are that:

(i) All children will have access to high quality and developmentally appropriate preschool programs that help prepare children for school

(ii) Every parent in America will be a child's, first teacher and devote time each day to helping his or her preschool child learn, and parents will have access to the training and support they need; and

(iii) All children will receive the nutrition and health care needed to arrive at school with healthy minds and bodies, and to maintain the mental alertness necessary to be prepared to learn, and the number of low-birthweight babies will be significantly reduced through enhanced prenatal health systems:

CONCLUSION

Goals 2000 is a federal effort that encourages states to develop their own educational reform. With no mandates or enforcement mechanisms, Goals 2000 represents a symbolic expression of the government's educational objectives. By incorporating the roles of state policy makers, educators, parents and communities to establish programs and educational goals, implementation is brought to the local level. In California, expansion of a school readiness component, best achievable through child care and development programs, can help ensure that the state's educational goals may be achieved.

Sources:

CA Department of Education, Elementary Academic Support Division.

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Here they Come: Ready or Not! Report of the School Readiness Task Force, California Department of Education, 1988;

The Condition of Education 1995. National Center for Education Statistics Prepared by Karen Judge, Diana Kalcic and Mary Vielleux.

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